

**STATE OF WASHINGTON
EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM**

Approved by the

Federal Communications Commission, March 3, 1997

Minutes of the State Emergency Communication Committee Meeting

March 3, 2013

Present: Terry Spring-KWPX TV; Chris Utzinger-WA MIL EMD; Mark Allen-WSAB; Jim Dalke-Dalke Broadcast Services; ROY Benavente-WA EMD; Clay Freinwald-WSU; Wendy Freitag-EMD External Affairs Manager

Phone: Arthur Willetts-KWDK; Lowell Kiesow-KPLU; Andrew Kinney-Thurston County EM; Don White-KCPQ; Andy Brown-NWS Spokane; Ted Buehner-NWS Seattle; Penny Linterman-Clallam County EM; Elray Rasmusson-Comcast Spokane; Carri Gordon-WSP; Ruth Brownstein-KAOS Olympia; Rip Robbins-Skagit Valley CC; Allen Rule-Comcast Seattle; Ray Dall-Daystar Television Network; Marlin Jackson-KXLY; Phil Johnson-CPS LACC

The meeting was called to order by Clay Freinwald and introductions were made. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

The state plan revision committee is working through the existing plan, taking out sections that are obsolete and adding stuff that is new, like CAP. A draft has been sent out for comment on the remailer. It is being compared to the Broadcast Warning Working Group (BWWG) best practices. The next meeting was supposed to be Tuesday, March 26, at Camp Murray, but it was postponed. All are welcome.

The SECC needs some input on Tab 19 which pertains to Cable TV systems. It is very old. Comcast is working on it. They are the dominant system in the region, but they are also looking at how other companies operate.

We are still awaiting Tab 10 (Monitoring assignments) for the Coastal area. If help is needed call Clay.

New low power FM's are coming on the air. We are working with them on EAS monitoring.

The Local Area Emergency Communications Committee (LECC) for Wenatchee will be meeting at Rivercom at 1 PM on March 28. Anyone is welcome, especially from Central Washington.

The LECC in Spokane will also be meeting on March 28 at 10 AM at the Spokane County Fire Training Center 1618 N. Rebecca Ave.

The National Alliance of State Broadcaster meeting in Washington DC was held March 4. There was a section on state plan revisions. The suggestion was made for a template from the feds. The feds need the state plans to track EAN's. There is a need to improve the propagation of EAN's through the system. The report on the national EAS test is not available yet.

If you are a NPR station please respond to the remailer on whether you carry EAN's. They would come down on the NPR squawk channel which would be feeding your EAS box. The squawk channel is an internal NPR satellite communications channel.

A report on the last FEMA IPAWS webinar on March 6 was sent out on the remailer., Besides the Washington State remailer, there is a lot of good information on the EAS forum. For information, and to subscribe, go to <http://eas.radiolists.net/>.

Recently, a movie trailer aired on several local TV stations that had fake EAS tones. This is illegal and a finable offense by the FCC. The tones do not have to be real to mis-lead the public. This applies to both cable and broadcast.

There was a recent incident of a fake EAS alert involving zombies that received a lot of publicity. A few stations around the country had their EAS boxes hacked remotely. It is not good practice to use the default passwords that come with the box. Also, the better the firewall, the better the protection. The password should be at least 10 characters and consist of letters, numbers, and other characters. The more complex, the better.

The Seattle SBE Chapter 16 is adding links to the SECC on it's web site and exploring other ways to support the committee.

In old business, the question came up again on how to get the local areas to update their plans. Most are outdated with, for example, no mention of CAP. The plans should be easy to understand. Lewis County will provide a template for the asking.

The test schedule was discussed. We should have a waiver from the FCC in order to customize the day/night schedule. For various reasons, for example the West Coast Tsunami Test, we need to be able to run a day test during a month where a night test is scheduled. Mark will talk to the FCC. This October's Drop-Cover-Hold event will also include Oregon and Idaho. There is national interest in this event.

In New Business, the March RMT was discussed. Norcomm was scheduled to originate, but they weren't able to do it. As is normal in those situations, the state originated it instead. The audio was over-driven and was for Okanogan County. These are training and practice issues. The audio was also sent as a WAV file instead of a MP3. It should have been converted by My State. Washington State Emergency Management is looking for more ways to connect with local emergency managers.

Enhancing the Technical Committee was discussed. This proposal was on the remailer in November. The enhanced committee would deal with the growing complexities of the EAS system. It would be expanded with more members with specialized knowledge. For example, have someone with TV experience for TV issues. It would operate on its own. It would include originators, the transport systems, and end users. Should it become part of the by-laws, possibly TAB 9?

Some recent CMAS problems were discussed. Should the SECC expand to include CMAS? What can be done at our level? Possibly public information and procedures. Any originator can send CMAS or EAS alerts through My State. As with many aspects of alerting, training is number one. This discussion will continue. Make your thoughts known on the remailer.

Clay would like to see a list of speakers that are available for various aspects of EAS.

Daystar received 148 messages from various dates from My State. This was referred to the technical committee. At least one other station had the same experience.

The National Weather Service is getting a blue ENDEC. They can now relay CAP alerts.

Mark Allen from the Washington Association Of Broadcasters talked about the Illinois First Informers Act. Something similar could be proposed in Washington next year. This requires formal training to receive credentials.

The Next meeting is scheduled for May 8 at Camp Murray at 9:30 AM.

Terry Spring